

Grand Hotel
(Horton Hotel)
332 F Street
San Diego
San Diego County
California

HABS No. CA-1974

HABS
CAL,
37-SANDI,
18-

PHOTOGRAPHS

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

ADDENDUM
FOLIOS...

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

GRAND HOTEL
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Location: 332 F Street, San Diego, California

Present Owner(s): N.C. Sutter, Robert Jonston, Fred Bertolino, Fred Muse

Present Use: Hotel

Significance: The Grand Hotel was one of the lavish buildings constructed in the San Diego boom period of the late 1880's. It was designed by the prominent local firm of Comstock and Trotsche, which was responsible for some of the most exhuberant buildings in the San Diego area.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1888. (The date of construction is based on tax records for the property which showed an dramatic increase in the 1887-88 book, microfilm delinquent tax records, San Diego County Tax Records County Administration Building according to "Historic Site Board Report" p. 1. The building appears on the Sanborn 1888 map, Sheet 19).
2. Architect: Comstock and Trotsche (From advertisement in Golden Era Magazine, September 1889, San Diego Illustrated Section, Vol. 38, No. 9, p. 464).
3. Original and subsequent owners: The Grand (Horton) Hotel is built on Lots G, H, and I of Block 63 in Horton's Addition in the City of San Diego. The land on which the hotel stands was bought in 1882 by Barney Kampling. (Book 43, pp. 122-123, San Diego County Deed Records).
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: There are no original plans of the Grand (Horton) Hotel known. The construction of this hotel was done at the peak of the San Diego boom of the late 1880's. It was probably constructed quickly, using pre-fabricated materials. The facade with its projecting bays and extensive use of sheet metal ornamentation, for example, is similar in details to many other San Diego buildings constructed at the same time. It is not one of the more careful productions of the Comstock and Trotsche office, which designed buildings of great sophistication and thoughtful detailing. Its interior skylighted stair hall, however, is very impressive. The plan, with its elaborate systems of skylights and windows opening onto the main stair hall bringing air and light into the closely packed building, allowed maximum economic exploitation of the site.

5. Alterations and additions: There have been a number of changes at the Grand (Horton) Hotel to gain additional light, increase sanitary facilities, provide better access to fire exits, and to augment the number of individual hotel rooms. Two of the front rooms on each floor were vacated to provide direct access to the fire escapes installed on the balconies. The center bay of the balconies on each floor has been covered with concrete, and three metal ladders have been installed for fire protection. A number of toilets and baths have been installed in small rooms on the east side of the building. Several windows have been pierced on the east side of the building, which was originally blank, probably in anticipation of tall buildings adjacent to it. Another change involves the addition of metal tension rods to support the balconies, all of which show notable signs of deflection. Originally, it appears that most or all of the apartment units consisted of more than one room. This arrangement is at present only visible in the second floor south-west rooms, where the front room opens onto the back room by a set of double doors. Everywhere else in the building the connecting doorways have been blocked to form single rooms. The shop fronts on the ground floor with the very large sheets of glass, clearly visible in an early photograph, have been greatly altered by the addition of new siding and signs.
- D. Sources of Information: (See National Register of Historic Places nomination form in the Field Records accompanying this report for additional information)
1. Old Views:
 - a. Exterior photograph of the hotel in the collection of the Title Insurance Company, negative 931, copy in the San Diego Historical Society at the Serra Museum. The photo is dated C. 1889. This photo clearly shows the window-less east wall. This photograph has been copied for the HABS records, and is reproduced as CA-1974-1.
 2. Bibliography:

"Historic Site Board Report," by Ed Scott, January 1974.

San Diego City Directories
San Diego Union, January 23, 1891, July 10, 1903
 3. Plans:

A set of plans was prepared by Monroe and Reeves, architects, of San Diego for the City of San Diego. These show the buildings in an "as is" condition, however, there are a number of mistakes and omissions, especially in the section. These drawings include:

1. Ground floor plan
2. Second floor plan
3. Third floor plan
4. Roof plan
5. Section, longitudinal

These plans have been reproduced for the HABS records.

Prepared by: Robert Brueggmann
Historian, HABS
San Diego Team
Summer 1975

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Description of Exterior:

1. Number of Stories: The hotel has three full stories and a partial basement.
2. Layout Shape: The structure is rectangular.
3. Overall dimensions: 60' x 100'.
4. Foundations: Unknown.
5. Wall construction: The walls are of brick construction, 12" thick. The bay windows on the south facade are of wood construction. Interior walls are of wood frame construction, 2" x 4" studs with lath (wood) and plaster.
6. Structural system, framing: The floor joists appear to be 2" x 14" spanning east to west, carried by the masonry exterior walls and the wood stud interior walls. The roof structure is inaccessible. Because of the depth provided and the necessity for framing the skylight, it is supposed to be a wood truss system.
7. Porches: The south elevation has concrete balconies with wrought iron railings at both second and third floor levels. The balconies, originally of wood, have been finished in concrete so as to comply for use as fire escapes.
8. Chimneys: None.
9. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main hotel entry is located in the center of the south facade. The double doors with single panels of glass are situated within an arched opening. The

arch above has been infilled. The pilasters flanking the opening are presently covered by aluminum siding, but the capitols are still visible. They have dentil moldings and concentric circles. These capitols support a decorated arch with keystone and small Corinthian order pilasters. The spandrels are paneled. The small pilasters support a bracket that in turn supports the second floor concrete balcony. The doors on the flanking bars are also double doors with single glass panes.

- b. Windows: The south facade has twenty-two windows above the ground floor. The second story windows (10) are all double hung, one-over-one windows with an arched transom. The third floor windows (12) are all round headed double-hung, one-over-one, windows. The windows within the brick construction walls have rusticated window trim. The bay windows on the second floor have recessed panel trim and keystones. The third floor bay windows have plain trim with recessed panels. The east elevation has sixteen double-hung, one-over-one, windows. The north elevation has sixteen double-hung, one-over-one, windows above the ground floor.

10. Roof:

- a. Shape: The roof is gabled (1 to 12 slope) with composition roofing which also covers the parapet.
- b. Cornice: The building displays a heavily molded cornice with ornamental sheet metal brackets. Above the paneled frieze is a row of dentils and a row of modillions. Above the cornice where the two bays project are pediments decorated with foliated scrolls.

11. Special Decorative Features:

- a. Corners: The corners of the south facade are punctuated with rusticated quoins capped by large brackets.
- b. Bays: The two bays are of wood construction and display at both second and third floor levels molded cornices and paneled spandrels under the window sill. The corners of the bays at the second floor level have Corinthian columns supporting brackets. The corners at the third floor level have fluted Corinthian pilasters. The underside of the bays and the balconies at the extreme east and west ends are coffered, the second floor balcony also having modillions.

B. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

- a. First Floor: The main entry and straight run of stairs with one landing is located in the center of the south facade. To the right (east) is the "Right Spot" (bar and grill). It consists of a long narrow room with a partition down the center and office, storage and restrooms in the rear (north). To the left (west) is the "Sports Palace" (bar) which is a long narrow room with storage under the stairs that ascend to the hotel. An office is also located along the shared wall. Storage, restrooms, and access to the partial basement are located at the rear (west) of the building.
- b. Second Floor: The straight run of stairs from "F" Street provides access to the hotel vestibule. The vestibule is a two story space, lit by a large skylight and dominated by the grand staircase connecting the two floors of the hotel. The hotel desk is to the west of the vestibule. Hotel rooms are disposed around the perimeter of the structure. There are four rooms across the south elevation and six across the north. There are four more along the east and west elevations. The east elevation also has two water closets and a bath. Two more rooms are located just south of the rooms on the north elevation. These rooms are lit by an air shaft. A storage room and a shower room flank the straight run of stairs from the street.
- c. Third Floor: The room layout of the third floor is identical to that of the second.

2. Stairways: The straight run stairs from "F" Street to the hotel vestibule are composed of thirteen risers. The double railing is adjoined to the paneled wainscoting that parallels the stairway.

The grand stairway connecting the hotel floors has thirteen risers to a landing with symmetrically divided flights which ascend back towards the south. The closed string stair has simulated tooled leather decorating the stringer. The grand stair has a double banister, arcaded railing and elaborately carved newel posts. The first flight and landing are enclosed beneath to provide for storage. Turned columns support the third floor balconies as well as the stair landing.

3. Flooring: The flooring throughout the hotel is 5" painted boards.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are lath and plaster. They are papered in the vestibule and halls, painted within the rooms. The straight run stairway has paneled wainscoting with a molded chair rail rising to the height of the banister.
5. Doorways and doors: All doors have three tiers of molded panels and symmetrically molded trim with corner blocks. All doors have transoms, although some have been filled in.
6. Special Decorative Features:
 - a. Skylight: The opening in the ceiling to allow for the skylight has a molded cornice with dentils.
 - b. Bays: The rooms with bays exhibit molded panel walls and coffered ceilings. The third floor bays are separated from the room itself by a pilastered arch opening.
 - c. French Doors: Many of the rooms were originally suites and were connected by french doors. Although most of these have been infilled to create single rental rooms the symmetrical trim and corner blocks still exists.

C. Site and Surroundings:

1. General Setting: The hotel faces south on "F" Street.

Prepared by: Kim Spurgeon
Supervisor, HABS
San Diego Team
Summer 1975

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